

What Everyone
Should Know About . . .

Genuine
MAHOGANY

CONSUMER

SALESMAN

RETAILER

MANUFACTURER

WHOLESALER

DESIGNER

ARCHITECT

DECORATOR

EDUCATOR

MAHOGANY ASSOCIATION
INC.

What is

GENUINE MAHOGANY?

■ Ever since Genuine Mahogany earned its reputation centuries ago as the world's finest cabinet wood, there has been an endless search for something as good or nearly as good. This search has been fruitless.

Nevertheless, the public has been duped many times by finishes which simulated Genuine Mahogany, by plastic imitations, by photographic reproductions, and by the use of qualifying prefixes in connection with other woods which bear no relation whatsoever to Genuine Mahogany.

Genuine Mahogany is produced commercially only in tropical America and Africa—not in the Philippines or any other parts of the world.

Swietenia is the accepted botanical name for Tropical American Mahogany, and it grows principally in the West Indies, southern Mexico, Central America, and in the upper Amazon Valley in western Brazil and Peru. Mahogany from Central America became known as "Honduras Mahogany" before the Central American possessions broke away from Spain and became the several nations of this area.

Khaya is the accepted botanical name for African Mahogany although it was first named *Swietenia*. It grows principally on the Gold Coast, Ivory Coast, and in Nigeria. Only *Swietenia* and *Khaya* are Genuine Mahogany!

So, when buying or specifying Mahogany be sure it is GENUINE! Be sure that it is *Swietenia* or *Khaya* from Tropical America or Tropical Africa.

George N. Lamb

Al Albini

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INTRODUCTION

■ Long before there were laboratories for scientific testing of physical and woodworking properties of wood, the experience of generations of cabinetmakers clearly established the supremacy of Genuine Mahogany.

During the most brilliant period of furniture design, Genuine Mahogany was the medium which inspired and brought forth the immortal furniture of the 18th Century which to this day are timely creations. Everyone is familiar with the names of Chippendale, Adam, Hepplewhite, Sheraton and Duncan Phyfe whose celebrated works are indelibly imprinted in furniture design.

Although abundantly confirmed by the craftsmen of the past, scientific tests in later years re-affirmed what they knew. Mahogany has so many fine qualities that it is truly the measure by which other cabinet woods are judged. One wood may equal Mahogany in one characteristic and another wood in another quality; but in Mahogany are combined, to a rare degree, the many qualities desired by master craftsmen.

Laboratories both in this country and abroad have studied the factors that influence strength, hardness and stability of woods. The U. S. Forest Products Laboratory has also tested the workability of the important woods. In every respect, Mahogany received a very high rating. In fact, no other wood made that rating. Genuine Mahogany excelled above all in mortising, boring, planing, shrinking, warping, shaping and turning.

Today, as in centuries past, Genuine Mahogany is the leading wood in many fields. Wherever style, design, and quality craftsmanship are sought, Genuine Mahogany is the wood that is preferred. And, when you have read this booklet, you will understand why, "After all, there's nothing like Genuine Mahogany."

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What Everyone Should Know About...

GENUINE MAHOGANY FURNITURE



■ Because Genuine Mahogany is most often associated with furniture, the first part of this booklet endeavors to give some of the answers to why it is so frequently mentioned with the finest in furniture.

Is there much Mahogany furniture today?

Yes, very much. It may be surprising to some people to know that over one-third of the medium and better grade bedroom and dining room furniture made in America is Mahogany.

What furniture styles use Mahogany?

Today, the greatest use of Mahogany is in traditional and contemporary or modern furniture. Mahogany is the standard cabinet wood for American and English 18th Century styles that make up the bulk of traditional furniture. It is also the favorite in better quality of contemporary furniture.

Why is Mahogany found in most furniture styles?

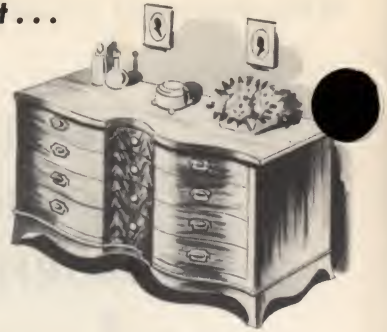
The reasons are threefold: quality, versatility and design. In keeping with the quality trend, manufacturers are using more Mahogany than ever before because of its undisputed public acceptance as the finest cabinet wood. From a manufacturing standpoint, Mahogany's versatility ranks above all other woods and at very favorable costs. Design-wise, Mahogany's adaptability enables designers to translate their style creations with utmost manufacturing fidelity.

What makes Mahogany so different from other woods?

Its general superiority. One wood may equal Mahogany in one characteristic and another wood in another quality; but in Mahogany are combined, to a rare degree, the many qualities desired by master craftsmen. Mahogany has so many fine qualities that it is truly the measure by which other cabinet woods are judged.

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■ What is traditional furniture?

The term "traditional" generally refers to American and English furniture of the 18th and early 19th centuries. The Anglo-American styles included Chippendale, Hepplewhite, Adam, Sheraton, English Regency, Federal American, and Duncan Phyfe, all of which were principally of Mahogany. To a lesser degree it includes some French furniture. The furniture made before 1700 was mostly massive in design and unsuited to modern use.

What is contemporary furniture?

Modern design in architecture has been in the making for nearly 50 years. It was primarily a revolt against the slavish use of classical Greek and Roman forms and decorations. In the past 15 years, modern design has been evolving in commercial home furniture at a steadily increasing pace. Its evolution has left by the wayside much that was weird and grotesque. Today, it is an established style characterized by simplicity, restrained decoration, and high functional values. The current modern style may well be called "contemporary."

Have traditional and contemporary designs influenced each other?

Yes, the best in contemporary design has taken much from traditional in line and form to the point where it could be considered as streamlined traditional. By the same token, traditional design has discarded dust-catching ornamentation and taken on functional values to the point where it also might qualify as a form of contemporary design.

Does Mahogany furniture fit into any type of architecture?

Yes, very much so. Versatility of style and design found in Mahogany furniture today make it adaptable to almost any kind of architecture and home furnishing decoration. If it is Mahogany, it's always in style — and will remain so indefinitely.

What Everyone Should Know About...

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■ CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE OF STYLES

This table illustrates the leading furniture styles of each period from Gothic to the Twentieth Century. Significantly, the first Golden Age of Mahogany (1725-1825) coincided with the Golden Age of Furniture, the 18th Century, which according to historians produced the greatest furniture in history. Genuine Mahogany was the medium which inspired the great masters of this period whose creations to this day bear their names. Most famous were Chippendale, Adam, Hepplewhite, and Sheraton.

TIME	ENGLAND	FRANCE	AMERICA	OTHER COUNTRIES
Early Styles	Gothic (1100-1500)	Gothic (1100-1500)		Gothic (1100-1500) in Spain, Germany, Italy, etc.
Sixteenth Century	Renaissance Tudor (1509-1558) Elizabethan (1558-1603)	Renaissance (1500-1610)		Early Renaissance (1500-1600) in Italy, Spain, Holland, Germany.
Seventeenth Century	Jacobean (1603-1649) Commonwealth (1649-1660) Carolean (1660-1688) William & Mary (1689-1702)	Louis XIII (1610-1643) Louis XIV (1643-1715) Early French Provincial (1650-1700)	Early Colonial (1620-1700)	Late Renaissance (1600-1700) in Italy, Spain, Holland, Germany.
Eighteenth Century	Queen Anne (1702-1715) Early Georgian (1714-1754) Late Georgian (1754-1795) including: (Chippendale, 1740-1779) (Hepplewhite, 1770-1786) (Sheraton, 1780-1806) (Adam Bros., 1760-1792)	French Regency (1715-1723) Louis XV (1723-1774) Louis XVI (1774-1893) Directoire (1795-1804) Early French Provincial (1700-1800)	Late Colonial (1700-1790) (copies of English, French and Dutch styles) Duncan Phyfe (1790-1830)	European furniture of this time greatly influenced by French, Dutch, English craftsmen
Nineteenth Century	English Regency (1793-1830) Victorian (1830-1890) Eastlake (1879-1895)	French Empire (1804-1815) Late French Provincial (1800-1900)	Federal (1795-1830) (also Duncan Phyfe) Victorian (1830-1900)	Biedermeier (1800-1850) in Germany.
Twentieth Century	Arts & Crafts (1900-1920) Modern Utility (1939-1947)	L'Art Nouveau (1890-1905) Arte Moderne (1926) Modern	Mission (1895-1910) Modern	Swedish Modern in Sweden. Modern in other countries.

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GENUINE MAHOGANY FURNITURE



■ Are many musical instruments made of Mahogany?

Yes, quite a few. Over half of the pianos and organs are made of Mahogany and most of them are in a light, graceful design with a finish that is serviceable and that reveals the rare beauty of the wood. Besides these, there are many other musical instruments made of Mahogany such as phonographs, violins, guitars and ukuleles.

What about radio, television, and hi-fi cabinets?

Among the better quality cabinets, Mahogany has a high consumer preference because it is in fact a fine piece of furniture. The trend in this field is toward selling sets as quality furniture pieces in a variety of traditional and contemporary styles that are in harmony with the rest of the furniture in a home. In the relatively new hi-fi field, Mahogany is becoming increasingly recognized not only for its beauty, but also for its perfect resonance qualities.

Is there much office furniture in Mahogany?

Executive office furniture that is distinctive in style and quality is obtainable in Mahogany. Within the last two years there has been a trend toward Mahogany office desks of a contemporary-traditional design which are truly outstanding. Makers of modern office desks are just beginning to see the potentialities of Mahogany.

What about commercial fixtures?

Mahogany has long been a popular wood for bank and commercial fixtures. Custom cabinetmakers have always preferred Mahogany as a medium for fine craftsmanship.

What Everyone Should Know About...

GENUINE MAHOGANY FURNITURE



■ What about color coordination in home furnishing?

Mahogany in its natural reddish brown finish is neutral in color and lends itself to almost any scheme of decoration in floor covering, upholstery and drapery. Color is the keynote in the interior of today and Mahogany furniture permits its widest use. Besides, we find much contemporary Mahogany furniture in a wide range of color finishes that integrate into a variety of decorative color patterns.

Is Mahogany furniture expensive?

No, there is much Mahogany furniture on the market today that competes very favorably with furniture of other woods. Persons who have always thought that Mahogany furniture was very expensive may meet with a pleasant surprise when they go shopping.

Does Mahogany furniture have a resale value?

Good Mahogany furniture has a high resale value. One need only visit the auction room to be impressed with this fact.

How about the upkeep of Mahogany furniture?

Here again Mahogany, properly finished, excels. It requires little attention to look its best. Natural Mahogany finishes are a joy to the housekeeper.

What advantage is there in buying Mahogany furniture?

When buying any style of furniture, 18th Century or Modern, the shopper who has decided to buy Mahogany has a distinct initial advantage. Mahogany is in fact as well as in reputation the finest furniture and cabinet wood known. Few manufacturers, even the least conscientious, would be so impractical as to waste a first quality wood in a piece of shoddy construction, poor design or bad finish.

What Everyone Should Know About...

COLORS AND FINISHES ON MAHOGANY



■ Is there a Mahogany color?

The term "Mahogany" is widely but erroneously used to denote a dark red and slightly purplish color. The true color of Mahogany is the golden brown of well aged sherry. Today Mahogany may be finished in any color from shocking pink to blue mink.

Why is a cabinet wood finished?

There are four reasons: (1) to seal the surface (2) to facilitate cleaning (3) to bring out the full depth and beauty of grain and figure (4) to change the color or tone of the wood.

How can one tell how Mahogany has been finished?

It is almost impossible to tell from appearance whether a piece of furniture has been finished with lacquer, synthetic varnish, or shellac. Only the furniture manufacturer or finisher can supply this information.

What is a pigmented or toner finish?

Most of the colored wood furniture has a pigmented or toner finish that are lacquers proportionately reduced with lacquer thinner. They are applied to the raw wood followed by the usual finishing procedure.

What is a French polish?

French polish is a very old and very fine finish obtained by padding in repeated applications of shellac well diluted with alcohol. It requires a great deal of time and elbow grease, hence it is not suited to mass production.

What is an oil finish?

The oil finish also goes back to the 18th century cabinetmakers. To produce it, boiled linseed oil is rubbed on repeatedly.

What Everyone Should Know About...

COLORS AND FINISHES ON MAHOGANY



■ As oil dries very slowly, a perfect oil finish requires weeks or even months. Oil tends to darken the wood but makes a gorgeous finish.

What is a waxed finish?

A waxed finish is wax over lacquer, varnish or shellac. Waxing was once a hand job, but machines are now used to polish the larger surfaces.

What is an open pore finish?

Here the pores are not completely filled with finishing materials, hence the surface is not perfectly smooth. Open pore finishes are only used where a textured effect is desired and are more appropriate for wall paneling than for furniture.

What is a gloss finish?

This is a very shiny finish produced by omitting one step: the rubbing with pumice stone, water or oil that creates the usual mat finish.

What is "distressed Mahogany"?

Distressed Mahogany is a finish purposely scarred to give the appearance of long service. The piece then resembles an antique.

Why are some finishes dull and lifeless?

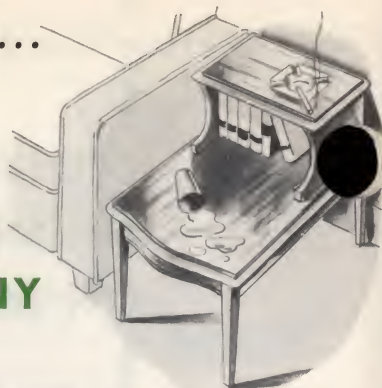
Because of (1) improper or excessive stains, (2) low grade materials, or (3) hasty methods. Improper fillers and bad timing produce blue haze and cloudiness in the finish.

Where does a poor finish start?

It starts with poor sanding in the cabinet room. There is an old saying, "Well sanded is half finished." After poor sanding comes a dull stain, and too much of it. Then a poor grade of

What Everyone Should Know About...

COLORS AND FINISHES ON MAHOGANY



■ filler, hastily applied, followed by a spray of heavy varnish.

How many steps are involved in finishing?

It depends on the quality desired. The highest quality finish on Mahogany may include as many as 14 different operations; the average quality may have a dozen steps; while the minimum Mahogany finish includes about eight operations.

What are some of the primary requirements for a fine finish?

Because finishing requires many operations, it is very important to start with good materials. Careful selection of proper veneers and lumber that are seasoned and kiln dried is paramount.

Are there any wood finishes that are highly resistant to abuse?

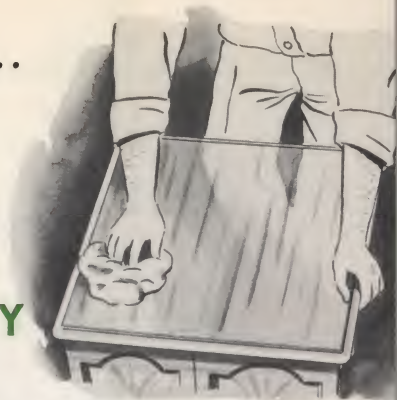
Yes, in the higher priced furniture there are finishes that are very resistant to scratching, marring, checking, and hot liquids. For example, good lacquers, varnishes and synthetics are available that are resistant in the boiling water region, a little over 200 degrees.

What about resistance to burning cigarettes?

There are no practical production finishes which may be applied directly to wood that are resistant to burning cigarettes. Considerable research and development have been going on in this direction which may soon produce such finishes. However, there is a plywood construction having an added layer of aluminum foil between the surface veneer and the next layer which when coated with synthetic resin becomes highly resistant to burning cigarettes, alcohol, nail polish remover, and other types of abuse.

What Everyone Should Know About...

COLORS AND FINISHES ON MAHOGANY



What is the natural color of Mahogany?

The color of freshly cut Mahogany is yellowish to pink. Exposed to light and air, it turns to a golden brown or a sherry color, then with age slowly acquires a rich patina.

What is blonde Mahogany?

When the lighter colors became popular in wood finishes, the practice of bleaching Mahogany developed. Many of the earlier attempts were not successful. Eventually, after research and experimentation, a very satisfactory procedure was developed. It has been quite widely used. The term "blonde" and "bleached" are used interchangeably. The very light toner finishes may be called blonde, however they are often called by such names as sea foam and sand tone.

What is Cordovan Mahogany?

Cordovan Mahogany is a deep dark red finish the color of Cordovan leather. It is usually applied to pieces of modern design to contrast with the modern bleached finishes.

What is Old World Mahogany?

The Old World type of finish is one which closely approximates that of the finest heirloom pieces. Instead of one stain, there are two, the first golden, the second sherry colored. This combination brings out all the rich highlights and shadows.

What is "antique Mahogany"?

"Antique Mahogany" was the forerunner of the Old World finish. Typically, panels were "shaded" and then wiped off in the middle to give a highlighted or two-tone effect, an improvement over the old red finish.

What Everyone Should Know About...

FIGURES IN MAHOGANY



■ What causes figure in Mahogany?

Mainly variations in the direction of the grain on the exposed surface. Figure is also affected by the direction of the cut. Thus, quartered surfaces tend to a stripe figure, while flat cut surfaces tend to a central V or leaf pattern. Variations in figure are the result of irregularities in the grain.

What does "quartered" mean?

Quartered means that the log is cut lengthwise into segments (quarters, sixths, eighths) to be cut at approximately right angles to the annual growth rings.

What is crotch Mahogany?

The crotch figure comes from the trunk of a tree just below the point where it divides into two limbs of about equal size. Where the trunk divides, the grain becomes twisted and distorted, producing the exciting crotch figure.

What is crotch swirl Mahogany?

The crotch swirl figure comes from the outer surfaces of a crotch block. As the cut nears the center of the block, the swirl gradually changes to the true crotch figure.

What is ribbon or stripe figure?

This figure is produced by interlocking grain, characteristic of Mahogany when cut on the quarter.

What Everyone Should Know About...

FIGURES IN MAHOGANY



What is broken stripe figure?

Broken stripe is similar to the stripe figure except that the interlocking grain is twisted, making the stripes shorter and irregular.

What is flat cut figure?

This, too, is the result of interlocking grain. It is characterized by a V or leaf pattern, sometimes with edges showing a stripe figure.

What is figured flat cut?

Same as above, except that an irregularity of the grain has added a wavy or mottled pattern.

What is mottled Mahogany?

The mottled figure is basically a broken stripe. Cross wrinkles in the grain break up the stripe into short sections giving a mottled effect.

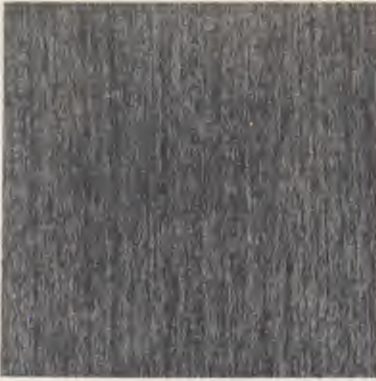
What is fiddle-back Mahogany?

The fiddle-back figure is produced by a more or less regular wavy grain. It is the pattern seen on the backs of old violins.

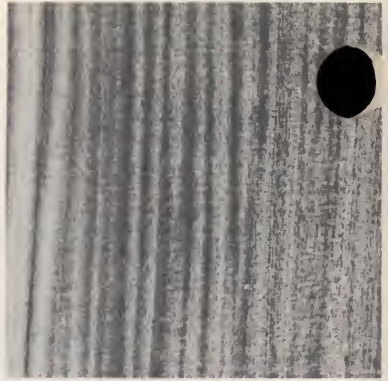
What other figures are found in Mahogany?

There are countless combinations and variations of the standard figures, plus freak figures that have no names. This is one of the fascinating things about Mahogany—the patterns from any two trees are never completely alike.

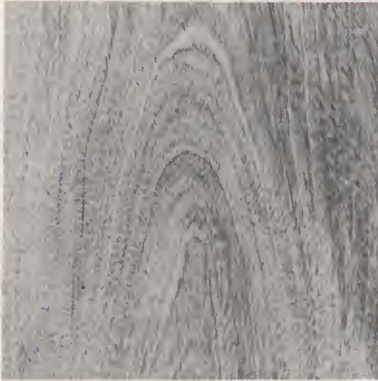
MAHOGANY FIGURES



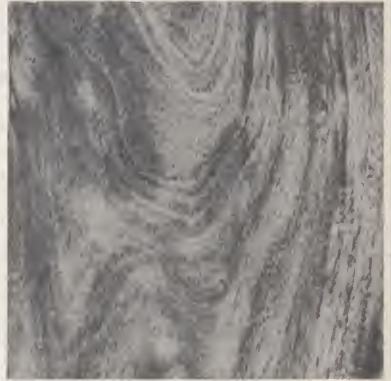
No. 41 QUARTERED, PLAIN



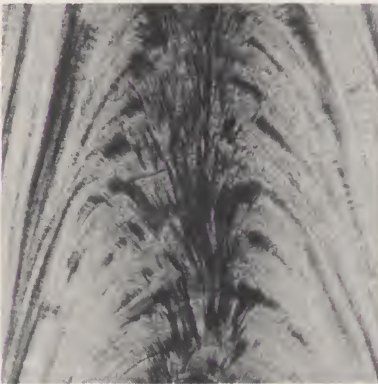
No. 25 QUARTERED, RIBBON STRIPE



No. 7 FLAT CUT, PLAIN



No. 31 FLAT CUT, SWIRLY

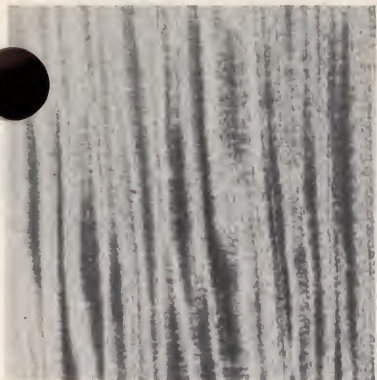


No. 1 FEATHER CROTCH



No. 42 CROTCH SWIRL

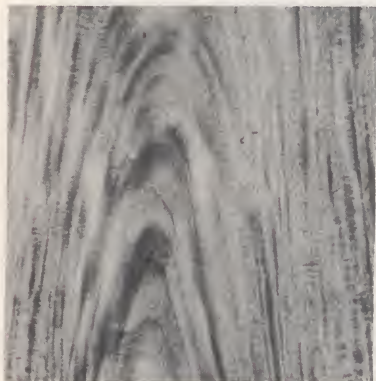
OF VARIED BEAUTY...



No. 26 QUARTERED, BROKEN STRIPE



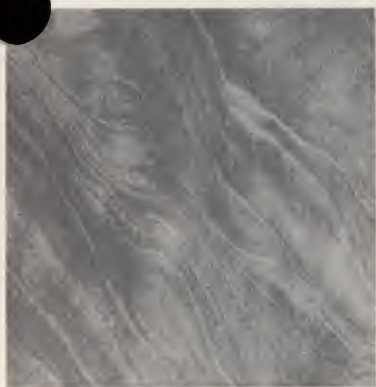
No. 6 QUARTERED, MOTTLE



No. 4 FLAT CUT, FIGURED



No. 21 QUARTERED, FIDDLE-BACK



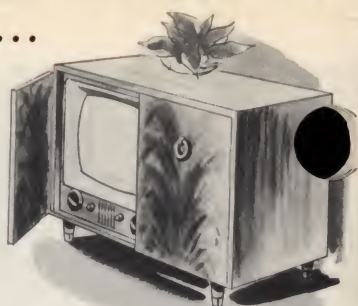
No. 36 FAUX SWIRL



No. 40 FLAT CUT, SWIRLY, FIGURED

What Everyone Should Know About ...

SUBSTITUTES AND IMITATIONS



■ Why should everyone be concerned about substitutes and imitations?

Whenever anything is good, there is always the danger to substitute or imitate the original product. Since Mahogany gained its fine reputation as a superior cabinet wood more than 200 years ago, there has been a constant worldwide search for something "just as good." This search has failed.

What kind of Mahogany substitutes and imitations are there?

Broadly speaking, there are two kinds: (1) wood substitutes (2) non-wood imitations.

What are the wood substitutes for Mahogany?

There is almost an endless list of various woods—mostly from the tropics—which have been offered as Mahogany. Usually these woods are described with a qualifying prefix. In the past, non-Mahogany woods have been called "East Indian Mahogany" (padouk); "White Mahogany" (prima vera); "Colombian Mahogany" (albarco); "Sapele Mahogany" (sapele); "Gaboon Mahogany" (okoume); "Costa Rican Mahogany" (crabwood); native Gumwood; Magnolia and many others. None of these is *Genuine Mahogany*!

Is "Philippine Mahogany" Genuine Mahogany?

Absolutely not! That name is the most persistent misuse of the name "Mahogany." Genuine Mahogany is not native to the Philippines. The trees which produce these woods, such as lauan or tanguile, are in no way related to Mahogany.

What is Genuine Mahogany?

It is Mahogany wood that comes only from tropical America and tropical Africa and only from trees of the botanical genus of *Swietenia* in America and the genus *Khaya* in Africa.

What does "Mahogany finish" mean?

This too is an outlawed term when used by itself for a piece of furniture made of a substitute wood finished to imitate Mahogany. It is permissible if the name of the substitute wood is mentioned.

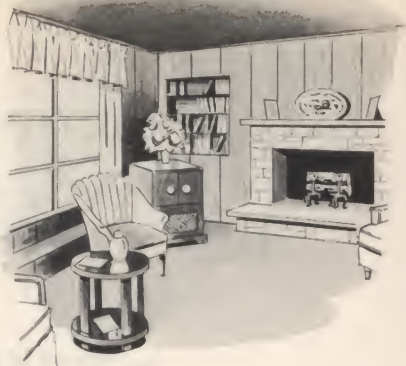
Substitutes And Imitations (CONT.)

Where does one look for substitutes in furniture?

Substitutes are most common in the solid parts of furniture such as the legs of a table and the framework of a case.

What are the non-wood imitations of Mahogany?

Principally the simulated "wood grain" found in plastics and on metals and hardboards. The process used for imitation ranges from photo reproductions of actual veneers to mechanical painting of a grained effect on metal or hardboard.



How are photographic reproductions made?

This process is similar to that employed in making decalcomanias. Often the surface to which this "picture wood" is applied is of plain, unfigured Mahogany. Printed wood reproductions are also put on high pressure laminates which are sold under various trade names.

Where are imitations mostly found?

Plastic laminations simulating wood grains are mostly found in occasional tables, on tops of some dining room tables, bedroom and vanity dressers. Painted grains on metals and hardboards are mostly found in radio and television cabinets. They are often advertised and sold as "Mahogany finish" which merely means a simulated finish that looks like Mahogany.

Why do plastics imitate Mahogany?

The reason is obvious: "After all, there's nothing like Genuine Mahogany." While imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, imitation can never equal the genuine article. The name "Genuine Mahogany" has earned such a high standing that there is tremendous temptation to misuse it or to capitalize on its reputation through imitation and misrepresentation.

How can one be sure of getting Mahogany?

The best assurance the public has of getting Mahogany is to deal with firms having an established reputation and to insist that the furniture bear the official Mahogany Association's tags and labels. For further information about these symbols of quality, see the chapter on "Tags and Labels."

What Everyone Should Know About...

CONSTRUCTION OF FURNITURE



What is solid Mahogany?

Solid Mahogany is furniture in which all exposed parts are made of solid Mahogany lumber. Such furniture may bear the Mahogany Association label or tag reading, "Solid Genuine Mahogany."

What is veneered Mahogany?

Veneered Mahogany is furniture that usually has structural parts of solid Mahogany, with Mahogany-faced plywood panels. Such furniture may bear the Mahogany Association label or tag reading, "Genuine Mahogany."

Can both solid and veneer be used in the same construction?

Yes, much furniture is a combination, using solid lumber for structural parts, plywood surfaces between the framing. Dining and bedroom furniture, in both traditional and contemporary design are typical of this type of construction.

Is solid Mahogany better than veneered?

Neither solid nor veneered is a measure of quality. Both are good and both have their advantages. The value of solid Mahogany is proverbial. Modern plywood using resin adhesives bonded under heat and pressure, is far superior to pre-war plywood. It is a quality product. Veneered construction can be used for flat surfaces only; carvings and turnings must be of solid lumber.

What are the advantages of solid construction?

First, its universal acceptance by the public. Second, disfiguring scars on solid wood are easily repaired. Third, solid construction is the only means of capturing the beauty of turned and carved Mahogany.

What are the advantages of plywood construction?

First, plywood equalizes strength and stability in all directions. Second, it allows lighter construction. Third, it permits the use of highly figured and beautifully matched patterns.

What is the standard thickness of veneer?

The standard thickness is 1/28".

Construction Of Furniture (CONTINUED)

How are veneers cut?

Briefly, veneers are sliced from a section of a log known as a flitch which may be half or a quarter of the log. The veneers are dried and piled back in the sequence in which they were cut from the log. These piles of veneers from one cutting are also known as flitches.



How is plywood composed?

Plywood is composed of layers of veneer in which the grain of each layer is at right angles to the grain of the next layer. The core, or center, may be either veneer or sawn lumber. If lumber, then a core of many narrow pieces is best.

How is plywood made?

The making of high-grade plywood requires extreme care. Lumber core stock of narrow edge-joined pieces must be dried to proper moisture content, perfectly smooth, flat and free from defect, skillfully edge-joined and glued. Cross-banding must be of uniform thickness, also properly dried and joined. Face veneers likewise require exact drying, matching and joining, and should be the same on both sides of the panel.

What is "all Mahogany"?

"All Mahogany" is a trade term for furniture with all exposed parts either solid Mahogany or Mahogany-faced plywood—genuine Mahogany. The term "all Mahogany" can be deceptive to the public, because while manufacturers and dealers know what it means, a customer might take "all Mahogany" to mean *all*, inside and out.

What causes warping?

Absorption of moisture. Mahogany is noted for its stability through moisture changes.

What causes checking?

Checking (small cracks on the surface of the wood) is caused by excessive drying, a result of low humidity. Actually, a steam-heated room may be as bad for furniture as a desert location. One of the hidden values in a piece of good furniture is the use by the manufacturer of assembly parts which have uniform moisture content.

What Everyone Should Know About...

RULES for Describing WOOD FURNITURE



■ Why are there rules for describing wood furniture?

To protect the public against misrepresentation and deception.

Who made these rules?

These rules were established in 1925 by the Federal Trade Commission after conferences with Better Business Bureaus, lumber and furniture industries.

To what do the wood descriptions apply?

The wood descriptions in the rules apply only to exposed surfaces.

What are exposed parts or surfaces?

Exposed parts or surfaces are those in view when the piece is in use.

Must every part of a piece of furniture be Mahogany to carry that name?

No. The rules state that only exposed parts must be Mahogany.

What are considered unexposed parts?

Interiors, bottoms, and backs of cases. Bottoms, sides, and backs of drawers. Concealed framing in upholstered pieces.

Why should not unexposed parts be Mahogany?

It is not required by the Federal Trade Commission; however the use of Mahogany throughout the piece is a sign of high quality manufacture.

May a table with a decorative top be sold as a Mahogany table?

Yes, just as an upholstered chair may be sold as a Mahogany chair. A table with a leather, glass, marble, metal, slate, or flagstone top may be sold as Mahogany.

May a piece with inlays be sold as Mahogany?

Yes. Contrasting inlays are obviously decorations, and may or may not be mentioned in the description.

Must the interior of a closing desk be of Mahogany?

Yes. The desk may be open as often as it is closed.

What about inside doors of television cabinets?

They must be Mahogany. Doors and lids are open when the instrument is used.

What Everyone Should Know About...

TAGS

and

LABELS



■ Why should Mahogany Tags and Labels on furniture be used?

Because of the high reputation of Mahogany, there always have been efforts to trade on that reputation by substituting other woods or applying finishes that imitate Mahogany.

What are the types of Tags and Labels?

The two types are "Solid Genuine Mahogany" used where all exposed parts are of solid Mahogany lumber; and "Genuine Mahogany" used where all exposed structural parts and plywood faces are of Genuine Mahogany.

What color are the Tags and Labels?

Both of the tags are the same color—reddish brown background on buff stock. The "Solid" labels are gold with red printing; the "Genuine" labels are silver with blue printing.

On what are the Tags and Labels based?

The Tags and Labels are based upon rules for the designation of furniture woods approved by the Federal Trade Commission.

How are the Tags and Labels issued?

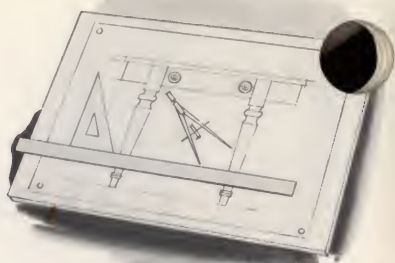
The Mahogany Association's tags and labels are issued under contract only to reputable manufacturers. They are numbered so that any alleged misuse may be traced immediately.

Of what value are the Tags and Labels to the public?

They carry a three-way guarantee of quality to the public by the strongest possible triumvirate: (1) The firms that produce Mahogany, know Mahogany, and wish to protect its good name. (2) The manufacturers who fabricate the piece and are zealous in the protection of the integrity of their product. (3) The retailers whose reputation for honest merchandise and square dealing are the foundation of their business.

What Everyone Should Know About...

QUALITY and VALUE in FURNITURE



■ How do you judge quality in furniture?

When you buy wood furniture you are buying four important things: materials, design, workmanship, and finish.

How can one be sure of getting quality furniture?

While there are quite a few tests for good furniture, the surest course is always to buy from a well established dealer with a proven record for quality and integrity. He knows the good sources, and he knows values.

What is the best way to judge wood?

When it comes to wood, one cannot take too much for granted. The best way to judge woods is by the authoritative tags and labels. For example, one always can be sure of getting "Solid Mahogany" or "Genuine Mahogany" furniture when it carries the Mahogany Association's respective tags and labels. The contract for their use carries a stiff penalty for misuse.

How is good craftsmanship determined?

There are a number of ways; some of these can be seen and others may be learned by asking. Smooth turnings and sharp clean carvings indicate good cabinetmaking. Make sure that carvings are real and not formed from composition material.

What else should one look for in craftsmanship?

Always examine surfaces, joints, and fittings. Surfaces should be smooth; drawers should move smoothly and joints well made; doors should be well fitted and close snugly; and all pieces should be tested for sturdiness.

How does one determine the quality and durability of finishes?

With top grade furniture, one may take the finish for granted. Generally speaking, all finishes are much better today than they were a decade ago. One test that can be used is to get

What Everyone Should Know About...

QUALITY and VALUE in FURNITURE



■ a slanting light on veneered tops. If there are depressions, it means defective material or poor workmanship in making the panel. Since it is so difficult to judge the real quality of a finish, it is well to ask a lot of questions about it.

What gives value to a chair?

Turn it up and see if the seat frame is well joined with double spiral dowels. Note if the corner blocks are ample in size, glued, and screwed into position. Test the chair for rigidity. Be sure that the legs are not spindly and also be sure that they are not badly cross-grained. Note whether the superstructure is well put together and smoothly finished.

What gives value to a table?

Tip the table so light hits the top at an angle. Note the absence of low places or indentations that mark poor workmanship. Judge legs as you do chair legs, testing for rigidity. If legs are curved examine the strength of laminated construction. With a pedestal table, attention should be paid to the cleanness of the turnings and the sharpness of the carving. Note the accuracy and ease of moving parts.

What gives value to a case?

Here one must look for the hidden values, in the drawers and inside the case. See how well the drawers are fitted; then pull them out by one handle. Note that the insides of drawers are smooth and clean, the corners dovetailed or lock-jointed, both indications of good workmanship. Inside the case, see if dust proofing is plywood, not cardboard. Pay attention to the smoothness of all surfaces and well cleaned corners. If drawer bottoms and sides are Mahogany, that is an additional plus value, giving extra stability. Such drawers do not stain, splinter, or show scars and will be easy to clean.

What Everyone Should Know About...

THE MAHOGANY TREE



■ Are there any Mahogany forests?

None. Mahogany grows as scattered trees in the tropical jungle. An average of two trees to the acre is considered a good stand. In most operations in these areas, only Mahogany trees are cut.

What does a Mahogany tree look like?

A Mahogany tree in tropical America has bark much like elm, and a compound leaf similar to the ash or hickory leaf. The tree usually has a spreading or buttressed base.

How big are Mahogany trees?

The mature tree may reach a diameter of 8 or 9 feet and a height of 150 feet. The average is 3 to 5 feet thick, 100 to 125 feet tall. Mahogany trees produce lumber and veneer that are long, wide, and free from defect.

How old are Mahogany trees?

Forest grown trees range from 150 to 250 years; over-mature trees may reach twice that age.

What about the supply of Mahogany?

The supply of Mahogany will last indefinitely, but it will mean going farther and farther back from rivers and other methods of transportation. Reforestation, while limited, shows promising results.

How difficult is Mahogany hunting and logging?

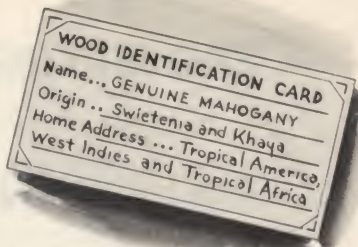
The long and eventful trip from the stump to the mill is an endless struggle against countless hazards involving rain, floods, transportation, and political instability.

When was the Mahogany tree botanically classified?

Although the Mahogany tree has been known to Europeans since shortly after the discovery of America, or about 1500, it was not botanically classified until 1760 when it was named "Swietenia." In 1830, the geographical differentiation was made between the tropical American species of Swietenia and the African species of Swietenia, with the latter being changed to Khaya.

What Everyone Should Know About...

IDENTIFYING MAHOGANY



■ How can one be assured that a piece is Genuine Mahogany?

The one sure way is to look for the Mahogany Association label or tag. If furniture is unlabeled, it is prudent to inquire and safer to insist that "Genuine Mahogany" or "Solid Mahogany" be included on the bill of sale.

Does all Mahogany furniture carry the Mahogany Association labels or tags?

No, not all. However, for your own protection it is advisable to purchase furniture carrying the Mahogany Association's tags or labels.

What about other tags on furniture?

The usual tag on a piece of furniture has stock identification numbers, perhaps style name, and a space for "finish." This space may say "Mahogany" or an abbreviation of the word. It may say "Cordovan," "Seafoam" or "Suntan." One cannot safely assume that such designations mean that the wood used is Mahogany or that all exposed surfaces are Mahogany.

Is color a good means of identifying Mahogany?

No. An expert finisher may finish any wood any color.

Is figure a good means of identification?

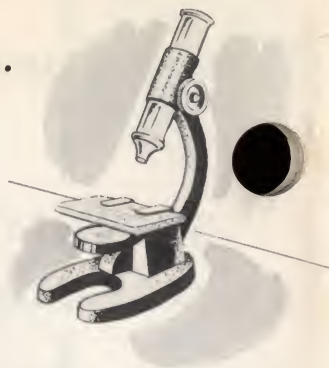
Good, but not infallible. Figure distinguishes Mahogany from native woods reasonably well, but there are tropical woods with grain and figures that closely resemble Mahogany.

What is the best clue for identification?

The pores in the wood. These can be seen by the naked eye as fine pen lines, dashes, or dots, accordingly as the surface is cut with the grain or somewhat across it. If the pores are not visible, the wood is most likely gum, magnolia, or maple. If the pores are barely visible, the wood is probably birch. Study surfaces that are known to be Mahogany, birch, magnolia, and gum.

What Everyone Should Know About...

PROPERTIES OF MAHOGANY



■ **Is Mahogany a heavy wood?**

Medium. The ideal specific gravity of a cabinet wood is 0.45 to 0.65. Mahogany averages about 0.55.

Is Mahogany a hard wood?

Medium hard. Weight and hardness are closely associated properties in wood.

Is Mahogany a strong wood?

Very strong. Its high strength-for-weight is a big reason why it was in great demand for PT boats and aircraft in World War II.

Is Mahogany a durable wood?

Extremely so. Termites avoid Mahogany, and it is very resistant to organisms of decay.

Is Mahogany a stable wood?

Very stable. A main reason why Mahogany ranks as a top cabinet wood is its fidelity to fashioned form.

Is Mahogany easy to work?

So easy that generations of craftsmen have preferred to work with Mahogany.

Is Mahogany a beautiful wood?

Unsurpassed! For all its superb physical properties, Mahogany's greatest claim to fame is its ever varied but always enduring beauty.

Does Mahogany have much variety in appearance?

Infinite variety, both in figure and pattern. Mahogany is the wood in which many of the beautiful figures first became known.

Is Mahogany adaptable?

Mahogany is one of the most adaptable of all cabinet woods, to all forms of cabinetry and to a wide range of finishes.

Will Mahogany take a fine finish?

Mahogany responds to the skilled art of the wood finisher with glowing highlights and undertones unmatched by any other cabinet wood.

Does Mahogany fade or grow shabby with age?

Mahogany has the happy faculty of growing richer and more beautiful with the passing years.

KINDS OF MAHOGANY

What is Mahogany?

Mahogany is the wood of a distinctive tree found only in the tropics of America and West Africa.

How many kinds of Mahogany are there?

Three: West Indian, Tropical American, and African. All are of high quality; only an expert can distinguish them in finished furniture.

What is West Indian Mahogany?

West Indian Mahogany, recognized by its close grain and silky texture, was the first Mahogany known in England and America. It was the Mahogany of Chippendale's time. Today West Indian Mahogany is not available in commercial quantities.

What is Tropical American Mahogany?

Tropical American is the Mahogany of southern Mexico, Central America, and of the upper Amazon in western Brazil and Peru. The Amazonian Mahogany is an excellent wood, slightly heavier and harder than that of Central America. It is used in lumber form only. Central American Mahogany, best known as "Honduras", is standard both as lumber and veneer.

What is African Mahogany?

African Mahogany comes principally from the Gold Coast, the Ivory Coast, and Nigeria. It is somewhat more open-textured than Honduras, not quite so heavy and hard. Most lavishly figured of all Mahoganies, African furnishes the bulk of Mahogany veneers. In fact, all crotch Mahogany veneers come from Africa.

What is Spanish Mahogany?

Spanish Mahogany is true Mahogany. The name was given by the British to Mahogany originating in the Spanish West Indies. The purpose: to identify the wood as non-British at a time of strong competition.

Kinds Of Mahogany (CONTINUED)

What is Swietenia Mahogany?

Swietenia is the generic botanical name for Mahogany from Tropical America, the West Indies, and the mainland.

What is Khaya Mahogany?

Khaya is the generic botanical name for African Mahogany.

Is a wood entitled to the name Mahogany just because it belongs to the Mahogany family?

Certainly not. A botanical family is a very broad classification. There are dozens of woods that belong to the Mahogany botanical family which have no resemblance to the Mahogany we know. Swietenia and Khaya are the only true Mahoganies.

What is "White Mahogany"?

"White Mahogany" is a misused term for primavera. Primavera comes from Central America, and is one of the best light-colored veneer woods.

What is "East Indian Mahogany"?

"East Indian Mahogany" is a name wrongly given to padouk, a reddish wood of value in veneer form.

What is "Sapeli Mahogany"?

"Sapeli Mahogany" is a name used in Europe. In this country, the wood is marketed under its proper name: just "sapeli". Sapeli veneer is noted for its regular straight stripe.

What is "Philippine Mahogany"?

"Philippine Mahogany" is the trade name for an indefinite group of woods known as Dipterocarps, from the Philippine Islands. The trees that produce these woods are in no way related to Genuine Mahogany trees.

What is "Costa Rican Mahogany"?

While Genuine Mahogany is found in Costa Rica, there has been an attempt to market a wood known as carapa, crabwood, cedro macho, or andiroba, under the name "Costa Rican Mahogany—Carapa species". This misrepresentation is not approved by the Forest Service of the Department of Agriculture and is under investigation by the Federal Trade Commission.

What is the

MAHOGANY ASSOCIATION?

■ In the typical American tradition, the importers and manufacturers who comprise the membership in the Mahogany Association are long standing successful American enterprises. Among them, several have been in the Mahogany business for over a century. Many are father and son teams who represent the continuity of several generations.

Today's members of the Mahogany industry are the survivors of hundreds of firms or individuals who have attempted to enter the Mahogany business, but who have succumbed to the hazards that have always surrounded it. They include the natural as well as man-made hazards such as transportation difficulties, floods, and political instability. Yet, despite the perils, the surviving firms have struggled to bring from the tropics the jewels of the jungles *Genuine Mahogany.*

Although incorporated since 1922, the nucleus of the Association had its beginning during World War I when, at the request of the government, industry leaders were called to serve in the procurement of Mahogany for aircraft and naval construction. Again, during World War II, the Mahogany Association was very active in government service when Mahogany became highly essential for naval and aircraft requirements. Among Mahogany's notable wartime records were its use in building the famed PT boats, gliders, and training planes.

Since its inception, the Mahogany Association has extended its helping hand to many public and private programs which were in the general public's interest. They included such national campaigns as the Better Business Bureau's program for accurate description of furniture woods in advertising and selling. Similarly, the Association has cooperated with the furniture industry in developing rules for honest description of wood furniture.

To further the interests and efforts of all segments of society such as the manufacturer, retailer, wholesaler, designer, architect, decorator, salesman, consumer and educator, the Mahogany Association has provided printed and visual material as well as personal counsel to augment their knowledge and appreciation of the most romantic of all cabinet woods *Genuine Mahogany.*

MEMBERS OF THE MAHOGANY ASSOCIATION, INC.

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